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**Next Generation Safety Consortium Formed by Leading Safety, Medical, Academic and Communications Organizations to Promote Broadband-Enabled Emergency Response**

*Group aims to expand innovative and sustainable broadband access and usage*

**ARLINGTON, VA** – Today, the formation of the Next Generation Safety Consortium (NGSC) was formally announced by its thirty charter members. The group brings together national emergency response, medical, academic, and communications organizations with leading disability rights representatives, [public media] and supporting government entities. By jointly seeking funding and participating in activities to enable the deployment of next generation emergency information and communications technology (ICT) for Next Generation emergency communications, the groups intend to raise awareness and demonstrate the significant benefits of broadband for emergency response. The end result – increased broadband adoption by a community that has traditionally not relied on the technology, and improved quality of service for individuals involved in emergencies.

“Expanded availability and use of broadband has empowered millions of consumers and businesses across the country,” said National Emergency Number Association (NENA) CEO Brian Fontes. “The same revolution is needed in the world of 9-1-1 and emergency response, but demand for, and use of, broadband has been nearly non-existent in this sector. The Next Generation Safety Consortium intends to change this by engaging in activities designed to unleash the power of broadband for 9-1-1, emergency communications and emergency medical response,” added Fontes.

“We are pleased to be part of a Consortium that promotes broadband access for the multitude of organizations involved in emergency response, robust and secure broadband backbone networks connecting these organizations, and the multiple services and applications enabled by such broadband access. This must be a national priority,” said [TBD], of Internet2.

“Today’s communications technology far too often leaves a large segment of our country behind, particularly when it comes to access to 9-1-1 and other critical emergency services for individuals with disabilities,” said Marcia Brooks, Project Director for the WGBH National Center for Accessible Media (NCAM). “Broadband technology, and the services and applications it enables, will improve emergency response, healthcare and education for all Americans, especially those with disabilities. We are pleased with the commitment of the Next Generation Safety Consortium to improve access to emergency services for the millions of Americans with disabilities and excited to join our partners in this innovative effort.”

Numerous government agencies, including state-level 9-1-1, emergency communications and homeland security agencies in Minnesota, Texas, Washington, Alabama, Indiana, South Dakota and Montana have signed on as supporters of the Consortium. “We look forward to working with the Consortium and its diverse members to facilitate the deployment of modern broadband-enabled next generation emergency response,” said Jim Walker, Director of the Alabama Department of Homeland Security.

“By providing a focus on the need for shared services and technologies necessary for Next Generation 9-1-1 and emergency communications, and enabling the development of these elements one time as part of a national initiative, states, regions, and localities will be able to avoid costly, time consuming, and unnecessarily duplicative efforts,” added Paul Mallett, Executive Director of the Texas Commission on State Emergency Communications. “It will also provide incentives for organizations involved in 9-1-1, emergency communications, and emergency medical response to accelerate their demand for broadband networks, and the services and applications made possible by broadband,” said Mallett.

The Consortium plans to seek funds from a variety of sources, with the first request coming in the form of a sustainable broadband adoption Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) grant being submitted to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) tomorrow.

A list of Consortium members and supporters can be found at the end of this release. More information about the Next Generation Safety Consortium can be found at the group’s newly launched website – [www.nextgensafety.org](http://www.nextgensafety.org).

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#### **Next Generation Safety Consortium Members**

Alliance of Information and Referral Systems  
American Association of Poison Control Centers  
American Telemedicine Association  
Association of Public Safety-Communications Officials International  
Ball State University  
Columbia University  
Emergency Interoperability Consortium  
Federation of American Scientists  
Gallaudet University RERC on Telecommunications Access  
IJIS Institute  
Illinois Institute of Technology  
Internet2  
Kristin Brooks Hope Center and the National Hopeline Network 1-800-SUICIDE  
Link2Health Solutions (a subsidiary of the Mental Health Association of New York City, Inc.)  
Mayo Clinic Medical Transportation  
N-1-1/8XX Essential Services Interoperability Council  
National Association of State 9-1-1 Administrators  
National Association of State CIOs  
National Association of State EMS Officials  
National Emergency Number Association

National LambdaRail  
Network-Centric Operations Industry Consortium  
Open Geospatial Consortium  
Open Group  
Stanford Research Institute  
Texas A&M University  
United Way of America  
University of South Alabama Center for Health Innovations  
WGBH National Center for Accessible Media  
2-1-1 US

**Next Generation Safety Consortium Supporting Government Agencies**

Alabama Department of Homeland Security  
Alabama NENA Chapter  
Ashtabula County, OH 9-1-1 Review Board  
Catawba County, NC Government  
Colorado 9-1-1 Resource Center  
Counties of Southern Illinois (CSI)  
Fairfax, VA Dept. of Public Safety Communications  
Fond du Lac County, WI  
Franklin County, NC 9-1-1  
Greater Harris County 911 Emergency Network  
Guilford Metro, NC 9-1-1  
Guymon, OK Police Dept.  
Indiana NENA Chapter  
Indiana Wireless 9-1-1 Board  
King County, WA E9-1-1  
Lake County, IN 9-1-1  
Metropolitan Emergency Services Board  
Minnesota Statewide 9-1-1 Program  
Parke County, IN Sheriff's Department  
Pierce County, WA Law Enforcement Support Agency (LESA)  
Rochester Emergency Communications Department/Monroe County 9-1-1  
Seneca, IL Emergency Telephone System Board  
South Dakota 911 Coordination Board  
St. Claire County, IL Emergency Telephone System Board  
State of Montana Department of Administration, 9-1-1 Program Office  
Steuben County Communications, Angola Indiana  
Steuben County, NY Legislature  
Steuben County, NY Public Safety and Corrections Committee  
Texas 9-1-1 Alliance  
Texas Commission on State Emergency Communications  
Washington State E9-1-1 Program  
Will County, IL 9-1-1 Emergency Telephone System Board